

- 27 -

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

β_2 -microglobulin fusion proteins and modified forms of β_2 -microglobulin are disclosed. The fusion proteins are shown to incorporate onto the surface of MHC I expressing mammalian cells and to cause an increased cytotoxic T-cell response to antigens presented by such cells. The fusion proteins are useful in methods of tumor therapy. Modified forms of human β_2 -microglobulin, particularly a form having a serine to valine transition at amino acid position 55 of the mature protein are shown to have an enhanced affinity for MHC I heavy chain, and are useful both in the disclosed fusion proteins and as a vaccine adjuvant where enhanced cytotoxic T-cell response is desired.